

What should I be doing?

To prepare at home:

- Stay up to date on all immunizations, especially flu and pneumonia shots.
 - Make it a habit to fill your prescriptions several days before you run out.
 - Plan ahead to have medications, food, water and other necessities on hand.
 - Have at least one hard-wired phone and know how to reach your family and support network.
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To stay informed:

- Check the KDHE Web site:
www.kdheks.gov
 - Listen to and watch national and local news and read newspapers.
 - Follow directions from state and local health officials.
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If you become ill:

- Get plenty of rest, drink fluids and take non-aspirin pain relievers for fever and body aches.
- Stay home until you feel well enough to resume normal activities (may take more than a week).
- If you become ill to the point of needing assistance in doing normal, everyday activities, contact your healthcare provider.

What is the state doing?

Kansas has a plan for responding to pandemic influenza. The plan calls for public health agencies to perform disease tracking and investigation.

Local, state and federal agencies, healthcare professionals, and the private sector will work together in a coordinated effort to maintain essential public services and preserve community health.

These agencies will share information with one another and the public throughout the duration of the pandemic.

We are:

- Preparing to obtain antiviral medications and distribute vaccines if they are available.
- Assisting healthcare facilities in planning for a patient load much larger than normal with short staffing.
- Helping businesses prepare to keep critical operations going.
- Planning to ensure that essential supplies and services to the state are not interrupted.

To read the State's Pandemic Influenza Preparedness and Response Plan, visit:
www.kdheks.gov

The State of Kansas, Kathleen Sebelius, Governor
Kansas Department of Health & Environment, Roderick L. Bremby, Secretary

Seasonal Flu and Pandemic Influenza

What You Can Do to Protect Yourself



What we all need to know: There is no pandemic influenza in the world today, but...

What is influenza?

Influenza (“the flu”) is a virus affecting the respiratory system. Every year, new seasonal influenza viruses emerge and cause illness in Kansas, resulting in about 1,000 deaths due to influenza and its complications.

The symptoms are high fever over 101° F, coughing, body aches, headache, and fatigue. Seasonal flu and pandemic influenza affect society very differently from each other.



... a new influenza virus spread from birds to humans in Asia has drawn attention to the possibility that pandemic flu could arrive in the United States soon.

What is pandemic influenza?

Pandemic influenza is a worldwide outbreak of influenza caused by a new virus to which people have little or no immunity. The symptoms of such a virus would probably be similar to those of seasonal flu, but the duration and/or severity of the symptoms would be different. The virus would spread in the same way as a seasonal influenza virus.

The prevention and treatment measures for such a virus would also be the same as for seasonal influenza. The H5N1 “bird flu” virus is one that could cause an influenza pandemic, but today it is not pandemic influenza.

When to Seek Medical Help

You should seek medical help if you have a high fever with a headache, shortness of breath, are unable to eat or drink, or have excessive tiredness that prevents you from using the kitchen or bathroom in your home. A high fever is defined as having a body temperature of 101° F or more. These are signs that you are sick, may be contagious and may have influenza. Seeking help when you feel sick with these symptoms will help make sure you are using the healthcare system in a responsible way.

Influenza Symptoms

How Influenza Spreads

Fever of 101° F or more

Influenza viruses are spread in tiny droplets expelled when coughing or sneezing.

Headache

They can easily spread from person to person. People can also

Extreme tiredness

become infected by touching something that was recently contaminated with the virus and then touching their mouth or nose or using their hands when eating. A sick person may be able to infect others several days before showing any symptoms and up to five days after becoming sick.

Dry cough

Sore throat

Muscle aches

A runny nose is not typical of the influenza virus.

How to Avoid Getting and Spreading Influenza

Practice good health habits starting today!

- ✓ Wash your hands frequently with soap and warm water or an alcohol-based gel.
- ✓ Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- ✓ Cover your coughs and sneezes. Use a disposable tissue and throw it away immediately, or use the crook of your elbow to keep the virus off your hands.
- ✓ Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- ✓ Stay home when you are sick.
- ✓ Get a flu shot every year.

Visit the KDHE Web site at: www.kdheks.gov for more information and updates.